

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W

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O R 220910Z AUG 75

FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3863

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

USMISSION NATO

S E C R E T LISBON 4796

EXDIS

DEPT PLEASE PASS INFO DIA WASHDC, USCINCEUR VAHINGEN GER AND
CINCLANT NORFOLK VA

E.O. 11652/ XGDS-4

TAGS:, PINT, PO

SUBJ: MESSAGE FROM THE PALACE OF BELEM

1. AT 10:30 P.M., AUGUST 21, 1975, MAJOR ANTONIO CALDAS,
SENIOR AIDE TO PRESIDENT COSTA GOMES, DROPPED IN AT THE DATT'S
HOME FOR AN INFORMAL CONVERSATION. IT WAS OBVIOUS THAT HE HAD
INFORMATION TO BE RELAYED TO THE AMBASSADOR PRIOR TO HIS
MEETING WITH COSTA GOMES ON AUGUST 22. IT WAS NEVER MADE CLEAR
EXACTLY WHO WAS SPONSORING THE MESSAGE. A REASONABLE GUESS
IS FERREIRA DA CUNHA.

2. IT WAS CONSIDERED ADVISABLE THAT THE AMBASSADOR KNOW
THE FOLLOWING:

A. ON AUGUST 20 GENERAL OTELO SARAIVA DE CARVALHO HAD
SENT A LETTER TO VASCO GONCALVES SAYING THAT GONCALVES COULD
NO LONGER CONSIDER HIMSELF TO BE SUPPORTED BY THE AFM AND
THAT HE SHOULD MAKE PLANS TO WITHDRAW FROM THE GOVERNMENT BY THE

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END OF THE WEEK.

B. ALTHOUGH COSTA GOMES WILL NOT RAISE THE SUBJECT WITH THE AMBASSADOR, IT IS COSTA GOMES'S INTENT THAT VASCO GONCALVES RESIGN HIS POSITION NLT MONDAY, AUGUST 25.

C. ONE OF THE THINGS THAT MOTIVATED THE DECISION TO DROP VASCO GONCALVES WAS THE ULTIMATUM (PRESUMABLY OTELO-ANTUNES) SUPPORTED BY GENERALS CHARAIS AND FEZARATT CORREIA, REGIONAL COMMANDERS, THAT UNLESS VASCO GONCALVES WAS REMOVED, A PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT OF PORTUGAL WOULD BE FORMED IN THE NORTH AND PREPARATIONS MADE FOR A MARCH ON LISBON.

D. DATT ATTEMPTED TO ASCERTAIN THE PROBABLE HEAD OF THE NEW GOVERNMENT. CALDAS WAS UNSURE BUT SAID IN HIS OPINION VITOR CRESPO, FORMER HIGH COMMISSIONER OF MOZAMBIQUE, WAS A FRONT RUNNER.

3. COMMENT: IN LIGHT OF ABOVE, I MAY MODIFY MY TALKING POINTS DEPENDING ON HOW THE CONVERSATION PROCEEDS. THERE IS NO POINT IN LAYING INTO COSTA GOMES IF HE HAS FINALLY DONE WHAT WE HAVE BEEN URGING. NEVERTHELESS I WILL MAKE IT CLEAR THAT WE ARE CONCERNED, AND THAT WE ARE SYMPATHETIC TO THE POINTS MADE IN THE MELO ANTUNES DOCUMENT. THE PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT, THE SECRETARY'S STATEMENT, MY CONSULTATION AND MY REQUEST FOR AN APPOINTMENT HAVE ALL HELPED; IF NOTHING ELSE THEY PROMPTED CALDAS TO PROVIDE US WITH INFORMATION THAT IS OBVIOUSLY BEING CLOSELY HELD. COSTA GOMES MAY ALSO WANT TO BE ABLE TO SAY THAT HE ACTED BEFORE THE USG EXERTED DIRECT PRESSURE ON HIM.

CARLUCCI

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED ABOVE ADDRESSEES.

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